

Painting the Person: Character Traits and States of Mind¹

Use these adjectives to describe characters in literature. Note that though a character may act a certain way in one scene or moment in the story, each person possesses traits that depict his or her *overall* personality or nature (label which are **traits** and which are **emotions or states of mind**. What adjectives should be added? What would a character **do or say** to promote his or her trait?

active	confused (E)	fair	immaculate
adventurous (T)	conscientious	faithful	immature
affable (T)	considerate	fanciful	impartial
affected	cooperative	fearless	impatient
affectionate	courageous	fidgety	impolite
afraid	cowardly	fierce	impudent
ambitious	crafty	finicky	impulsive
amiable	critical	foolish	inactive
angry	cross	formal	independent
animated	cruel	fortunate	industrious
annoyed	cunning	frank	inimicable
anxious	cultured	friendly	innocent
argumentative	curious	frustrated	insipid
arrogant	dangerous	funny	insistent
astonished	daring	garrulous	insolent
attentive	dauntless	generous	intelligent
babyish	decisive	gentle	intrepid
bewildered	dependable	giddy	jealous
blasé	determined	giving	jovial
boorish	diligent	glamorous	keen
bored	discouraged	gloomy	lackadaisical
bossy	discreet	glum	languid
brave	dishonest	grateful	lazy
brilliant	dismayed	greedy	lively
busy	disparaging	gregarious	logical
calm	disrespectful	grouchy	lonely
candid	dissatisfied	grumpy	loquacious
capable	distressed	gullible	loving
careful	domineering	happy	loyal
caustic	doubtful	hardy	lucky
cautious	dutiful	harried	manipulative
charismatic	eager	harsh	malicious
charming	easygoing	hateful	mature
cheerful	effervescent	haughty	mean
childish	efficient	helpful	meticulous
clever	eloquent	honest	mischievous
clumsy	embarrassed	hopeful	moody
coarse	encouraging	hopeless	mysterious
cold-hearted	energetic	hospitable	naive
compassionate	enthusiastic	humble	negligent
complacent	exacting	humorous	nervous
conceited	excited	ignorant	noisy

¹ Extracted from <http://cte.jhu.edu/techacademy/web/2000/kochan/charactertraits.html>

concerned	expert	ill-bred	obedient
confident	exuberant	imaginative	obliging
obsequious	facetious	smart	obnoxious
observant	reliable	sneaky	thoughtless
obstinate	relieved	snobbish	thrifty
opinionated	religious	sociable	timid
optimistic	respectful	steady	tolerant
peaceful	responsible	stingy	touchy
pensive	responsive	stolid	trusting
persevering	restless	strange	trustworthy
persistent	retiring	strict	uncontrolled
pessimistic	risk-taking	stubborn	uncouth
petulant	rowdy	studious	unfriendly
picky	rude	stupid	unruly
pleasant	safe	suave	unscrupulous
polite	sarcastic	sullen	unselfish
pompous	satisfied	supercilious	upset
popular	saucy	superstitious	useful
positive	scared	surly	valiant
precise	scornful	suspicious	versatile
proud	secretive	sweet	vivacious
punctilious	secure	taciturn	vulgar
puzzled	sedate	tactful	warm
quarrelsome	self-centered	talented	warm-hearted
quick	selfish	talkative	weak
quiet	self-reliant	tasteful	whimsical
quixotic	sensitive	tenacious	wise
rambunctious	shrewd	tense	witty
rash	silly	terrified	worried
rational	sincere	thankful	
refined	skilful	thoughtful	
sly	slovenly		

Pairings: aggressive/passive; _____

[illegible]